TRANSCRIPT—MICKEY AND MARY DEAN BELAND

Interviewee: Mickey and Mary Dean Beland

Interviewer: Tealey Ellis and Judith Robertson

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Abstract: The Belands discuss their move to Fairview in 1983 and their memories of the community at that time. They talk about the friendly people, the difficulty finding a house, and their involvement in the Fairview Christian Fellowship church. They also mention the sense of community in Fairview and the changes they have seen over the years. They discuss the Fairview Amateur Theatrical Society (FATS), their love for the community, and the personal connections they have made.

TE: So, ready. My name is Tealey Ellis. I am a volunteer with the Fairview Library Oral History Project. Today, February 27th, 2020. I am interviewing Mickey and Mary Dean Beland at the Fairview Library. Thank you. Mickey and Mary Dean for your time in sharing your information about your time in Fairview.

JR: This is Judith Robertson recording the oral history of Mickey and Mary Dean Beland at the Fairview Library at 10:45 on February 27th, 2020, for the Fairview Oral History Project for North Carolina Room at Pack Library in the Buncombe County Library System. The conditions of use form for sound and video recordings has been signed by the interviewees.

TE: Thank you. I notice, Mickey and Mary, that you were born out of state in Georgia and in Arkansas. When did your family come to North Carolina?

MDB: In 1983. We lived all over United States and we were transferred here because of Mickey's job.

TE: Okay. And you live, did you live in Fairview your first time here?

MDB: Yes ma'am.

TE: And that would've been, you said in '83? Okay. What are your memories now of what Fairview was like in 1983?

MB: Well, one thing that struck us right away was, it's a little different than where we had been. And, of course, we had been in a lot of different places that had been different also, because mostly rural and we enjoy rural living. So, Fairview was about as close to being rural as you could get and still be within Asheville, where my office was, downtown Asheville. It was easy to come and go from there. And the people were very friendly—

MDB: They still are.

MB: --but we had a difficult time finding a house.

TE: And how did you finally find one?

MDB: We finally, well, we had a real estate agent, but we had to decide on schools first. So, we decided on Reynolds for our daughter who was going to be in ninth grade, and our son was going to be in third grade. And we looked at Haw Creek and here, and finally we said, "We've got to stay in the Reynolds district." And then we settled on Fairview, because

of the Fairview Elementary, and we just, like he said, the rural area. It wasn't suburbia. And we found a house out on Garren Creek Road and every time people would come visit us that we knew from our past would say, "How in the world you find a house way out here," like they do to you, I'm sure. Well, in this world you find a house, but we...

Fairview, the traffic wasn't so bad, even though the highway was two-lane going in and out of Asheville, and we could get there within 15, 20 minutes easily, and just fell in love. And we met...

Our kids got involved and our son, especially in soccer, and met Kim Thompson and that's all it took. If you meet Kim Thompson, she's got you.

TE: Now, I have not heard that name previously.

MDB: Oh really?

TE: Is this someone that's born and raised a Fairview native?

MDB: In Asheville.

TE: In Asheville.

MDB: But they've lived out here longer than we have. Oh yeah, you need to talk to Kim Thompson. She...

TE: Do you have a telephone number?

MDB: I sure do. I'll give it to you before we...

JR: We'll get it to you afterward.

TE: All right. Super. Thank you so much, then. Maybe another interview coming up, right. While you're mentioning schools and deciding where you're going to live, and so forth, what did you think of the school system, because obviously you lived in other parts of the country, but what did you think of Reynolds and Fairview Elementary School?

MDB: You want me talk about that?

MB: Yeah, you can talk about that with Lori's question.

MDB: Well, we visited TC and Reynolds and our daughter was interested in music and drama, so Reynolds just seemed to fit that real well. And so that was a clue there for the high school. And then elementary school, we visited Haw Creek and it was, back then they called it Open Classroom. And I had taught... I have degree in education and I thought, I don't know if our son will fit that, even though we found the house there, and I think we made a offer and didn't get it.

But anyway, we came to Fairview and it just looked, that was the old school then. And this, I always tell... Our son-in-law is in real estate now, the secretary at the school makes a huge difference.

TE: It does.

MDB: And she was very open and very friendly and took us around and we just said this, it's going to work. And then he had a teacher assigned that was great, too. So, in fact, they were in school before we got moved into our house. We were living in a hotel for almost a month. A motel. So, we would drive them back and forth.

MB: You should probably tell them about what, whoever it was, the counselor or whoever that said...

MDB: Oh, Ms. Johnson?

MB: Right.

MDB: Yeah. The counselor at Reynolds, too. Our daughter had good grades, but she's not a good test taker. So, they look at all that and they said, "Well, really according to her test... And she should be in the regular classes." But Ms. Johnson said, "But I know you want her with the right group of kids, so we're going to put her in the honors classes, because I think she'll be with the right kids." And that was such a huge thing. I didn't realize it at the time, but that made such a difference, because then her peers, who became her good friends, she was with a group that encouraged her and spurred her on.

TE: And so, then your son went through Fairview Elementary and then he moved on to Reynolds, as well.

MDB: And now Chapel Hill and fell in love in sixth grade with Sarah Milford.

TE: Okay, so that's how that happened.

MDB: They were childhood sweethearts. There's nobody else but Sarah.

JR: Isn't that wonderful?

MDB: It is. It's been good.

TE: How long did you live in Fairview before you moved to Fletcher?

MDB: Just two years ago.

TE: Just two years ago. Okay. What kind of change...

MDB: It will be three years in April that we've lived in... Three years.

TE: From the time you moved here in '83 to Fairview to today, really, what kind of changes have you seen happen?

MDB: Oh wow. That's a long list. And you can…you want to answer that question?

MB: Well, yeah. Well, we were connected... Early on, we got connected with Hickory Nut Gap Farm and the people that are in and around Hickory Nut Gap Farm, which has been enormous amount of people, especially when Jamie and Elspeth were alive, and Jamie was always running for Congress and they had so many gatherings up at the big house and the farm. You meet a lot of people in that kind of a situation. And so, we met people from all over western North Carolina at those gatherings. And every Christmas time, they have people in for two days of singing and eating. You know, you are always going to eat when you go up there to the big house.

MDB: She asked you about change, too.

MB: Change? Well...

MDB: It's changed.

MB: The change is, well, several things. Even the church that we went to, which was...

MDB: The church here.

MB: Right here, first was in the what's now called the Triage Place, which was the old, you've probably heard this before.

TE: No, I haven't.

MDB: Tell us again.

TE: Tell us.

MB: That was the building that, where the church met. The Fairview Christian Fellowship met right there in that. And we've had as many as a hundred people in that, which was a double car garage at one time. And...

MDB: So that's changed a lot.

MB: So that changed. Yes. And that was a change first going in there to that place. Sunday School, we were in the doctor's office, which was the house. And that's where John and Will Hamilton. John Wander and Will Hamilton had their offices and their practices in that building. And...

MDB: Mickey used to...

MB: We both taught Sunday school in there.

MDB: Yeah, I was going to, Mickey used to teach the four- and five-year-olds in the X-ray room, and then they would be on one side of the x-ray table. He could do puppet shows on the x-ray table. It was funny.

MB: I could do...

MDB: All the goat sounds.

MB: Animal sounds. I'd...

MDB: Entertain them.

MB: Yeah. You know, got to get their attention.

MDB: Another big change too, I think is when they four-laned, which they needed, too. Because I was working in Asheville at Christian Bookstore, the carpenter shop, and coming home in the evening, that traffic would back up on that two-lane road all the way to River Ridge. And then once we got the four-lane, it made such a difference. But that took a long... That was two years that it took. I'm pretty sure that's right.

MB: At least two years.

MDB: At least two years.

TE: It's not overnight.

MDB: No, it's not. But it was faster than it is now, I think. It seems like it, anyway.

TE: When was the church building up here happen? When did that happen?

MB: I don't know the year.

MDB: I'm thinking, I got to think. I know it's... I think the '90s, in the early '90s, I'm thinking because '88 was that play that we just saw recently. A copy of the play that they did. And Lee was still here and we moved... We started going to Grace in '94.

MB: Yeah. But...

MDB: I'm thinking '92 maybe.

MB: When they built it?

MDB: I'm just guessing. When we moved up there. I'm sure we could, you could find that out. I'm sorry.

TE: I just thought you might know. So that's why I asked.

MB: Well, this was a cornfield out here.

MDB: Yeah, the library.

MB: So, that's a change. Well, this, all this property... Will Hamilton owned all this property, Will and Susie owned this property right here. And I think they gave the property for the library, as they did for the church building. Anyway.

MDB: All the housing and all that, you can just, well look at the school. I think there were like three, maybe three third grades when we put our son here, and I think that there's six of each grade now. So that says a lot about that community plus the young families.

But then you think of all the retirees here now.

TE: Right. When you moved here in '83, do you recall if there were any stores of any kind here in Fairview that you could do some shopping in?

MDB: Well, we always had to run down to Tickles.

MB: Tickles.

MDB: David Tickles, if you needed some milk and bread and that sort of thing, and then there was that little one there at Eblen Station. But not much. Of course there wasn't a Food Lion there, but it was okay. We didn't mind that. The only thing I minded is that nine o'clock at night, if my son said I need poster board, and we'd have to drive to Asheville for tomorrow. Always that way.

TE: In your earliest days, starting in '83, living in Fairview, what are some of your best... What were some of the best aspects of living here?

MB: I think the connection of the community and how easy it was to plug in, because, well, especially when you've got a catalyst like Hickory Nut Gap Farm, and the people that come and go to that place, and the exchange students that they brought in. And there was one lady called Moira Blair from England, Scotland that would come over and do theater. And she led theater. We had formed what was called FATS. You ever heard of FATS?

TE: No.

MB: Fairview Amateur Theatrical Society with a big A.

MDB: With Becky Stone. The Stones were in it.

TE: I never heard of that.

MDB: I know you've interviewed Becky and Pat.

TE: We did. We did.

MB: They didn't mention FATS?

TE: No, I don't recall.

JR: I don't think so.

MB: Well, they were both big.

MDB: When we got here, they had already done a Gilbert and Sullivan play, at least, and probably some other.

MB: HMS Pinafore, I think.

MDB: HMS Pinafore.

JR: Where? At the school?

MDB: We did it at the school. We did... Later we did it at the church. We did at Reynolds, wherever they'd let us.

MB: And we'd go to Highland Farms, too.

MDB: We'd go do them at Highland Farm. We did, let's think, we did Fiddler on the Roof and Mickey was the lead.

MB: Fiddler on the Roof. I was Tevye. And I had five daughters. My daughter was one of the daughters.

MDB: And then we did another...

JR: Gilbert and Sullivan.

MDB: Gilbert Sullivan. We did Pirates of Penzance.

MB: Pirates of Penzance.

MDB: And we did Oklahoma.

JR: That's impressive.

MDB: And we did, we've got some old videos. You know who played the piano? It was Robin MacCurdy. If you've met Robin, I'm sure.

TE: I haven't, but I think I've heard the name.

MDB: Yeah. Robin is... Did the piano for us. And Moira came from England and directed the play. She was here for a month, because we...

MB: At least.

MDB: And we'd meet at Betty Walters', who's no longer alive, house. Rehearsals. And then when Moira didn't come, we had Laura, our daughter, who's a theater teacher at Reynolds, I mean at Asheville High, then she was in college, but she directed some of the plays. I think she directed Oklahoma.

MB: Yeah. She and...

MDB: And Guys and Dolls. We did Guys and Dolls.

JR: You all did everything.

TE: That is amazing.

JR: That's impressive.

MDB: It was so much fun. And I know that Pat and Becky probably have some old videos that... We had some of them. I think we had Fiddler on the Roof.

MB: And the church did. They did a camp in the summer and they would do, and Moira would even direct that, too.

MDB: A four-week camp at Susie Hamilton's house.

JR: She was so amazing.

MDB: She's so amazing.

JR: Totally fabulous woman.

MDB: I know.

TE: And, well, this is the first time that...

MDB: You've heard of FATS.

TE: In all our interviews that we've heard of FATS. And so this is...

MDB: You have to bring the star in.

TE: Did you have a big turnout for these things?

MDB: Oh yeah, we'd fill that place up and sometimes we had to do two nights.

JR: Was it locals or just from Asheville? Did people come from other places?

MDB: Oh, people, our friends would come. Nobody else. But it was amazing, even though it was, we had a big A because amateur, but...

JR: That's fantastic.

MDB: Yeah, we all just had the best time.

TE: How long did that go on?

MDB: Well...

MB: Years.

MDB: Probably, at least maybe five years. Six years. Because Lori started ninth grade and she was in one every year. And then she directed some when she was in college. So, Becky would have, I know, because she and Pat were always in the plays. Pat was the star and John Ager was in them. And Annie, all of us. Annie played Tevye's wife.

TE: Oh, and what were some of John Ager's roles?

MDB: Oh, John played...

MB: John was Lazar, he was Lazar Wolf--

MDB: He was Lazar Wolf in that one. And then they all were in Guys and Dolls. John was one of the leads in that too.

JR: That's fun.

TE: That's amazing.

MDB: Patty Lynch was in Pirates of Penzance, because she's got... And she did HMS Pinafore. I know you've talked to Sandy Lynch before he got where he couldn't talk, or you haven't?

TE: No.

MDB: You haven't?

TE: No, I haven't.

MB: That's too bad because, Sandy...

MDB: Sandy goes way back.

MB: His family was where Susie's house is, that was his grandfather's place.

MDB: Was a doctor there.

TE: Oh really?

MB: Yeah. And he was a doctor for the Vanderbilt family.

MDB: Bill Lynch knows a lot of that history, too.

JR: Did he practice in Fairview?

MB: And Asheville.

JR: But he had an office here and he...

MDB: I don't know if he had an office here but he...

MB: His office was in Asheville.

MDB: In Asheville.

TE: What was his name again?

MB: He was a Lynch.

MDB: Yeah, Lynch. What was his name?

MB: It wasn't George Washington.

MDB: I don't know, but Bill Lynch. You know Bill and Kitty Lynch who live here? Bill would know all that.

TE: I've not heard their names, either. Bill and Kitty Lynch?

MDB: Bill would, he knows all that, because they owned so much property and that his grandfather had.

TE: We'll check and see if those names...

MDB: And Ridgeway.

TE: We'll check and see if those people have been interviewed.

MDB: They may have been in the past.

TE: There's another team that works, too. So...

MDB: I bet they have.

TE: We can check and see the...

MB: Sandy knows the history so well, but Sandy's in a...

MDB: Deteriorating.

MB: Yeah, he's in... He's got a syndrome that is going to take him out and...

JR: And Sandy is the doctor?

MDB: No, he's... His...

JR: He's the son of the doctor.

MDB: The grandson, actually.

MB: He's Ridgeway Junior. His dad died, what, a couple year and a half, two years ago?

MDB: Yeah, about three years ago. Ridgeway.

TE: Well, thank you.

MDB: I bet they have some of that, probably.

TE: Thank you for sharing this about FATS, though, because this is totally new information.

MDB: And somebody may have talked about it earlier. But it was a real fun thing for Fairview.

TE: I'm sure it was.

MDB: We put up posters.

TE: You mentioned a little bit earlier, Mickey, about sense of community when you moved here. Do you still think that exists?

MB: Yeah, but it's somewhat different, because even though John Ager is in politics, somewhat, and always will be. But he's not always having parties like his stepfather.

MDB: Father-in-law.

MB: Father-in-law. I knew he was related.

TE: He related somehow.

MB: He married a daughter. But that they've added such a richness to this community. It's amazing. They're all highly educated. Even though, sometimes you can't read the book by the cover.

MDB: That's a great thing sometimes. Doesn't take but a minute to figure it out.

MB: You're right. If you're exposed to it, which I have been, because I'm... As a forester, I've done the plan for all their properties, and they got divided up to all the individual heirs in that family. And so, they had to have a plan for each of those properties.

JR: So, are you an independent forester?

MB: Well, I'm a forestry consultant now, but I have been. Well, I kind of retired from everything now.

JR: What did you do before? Can I ask that?

MB: Well, I was with USDA Forest Service. That's what brought me here, was the Forest Service and the National Forest here in North Carolina, which the main office for all those forests is in downtown Asheville, and over close to UNCA.

MDB: Exactly.

MB: But that was my life career, was the US Forest Service.

JR: In an administrative position?

MB: No, I was a forester and a wildlife biologist.

MDB: But he was some administrative, at the end of his career.

MB: At the end, I was in management.

JR: But you were out there in the woods.

MB: Well, that's my passion. But when you're in management, you're less in the woods and more in the office doing stupid stuff, I would call that now. Since I'm retired, I can say that.

MDB: I want to answer your question about does it still have community. And I think since we've moved to Fletcher, we see the difference, or I do particularly, because Fairview is so... I think you can choose two things here. You can choose to get involved in the community by being part of the library, being part of the Welcome Table, Food for Fairview, or you can choose to just live like a suburbia, just driving back and forth to Asheville. And in our neighborhood we lived off of, in Meadow Wood, off of Emmas Grove Road, I saw that. I see people that I'd say, "Well we're volunteering at the Welcome Table." And they'd say, "Oh, okay." But you could tell it's two different worlds.

But what I love about it, so many people, because of the community of the Welcome Table, because of the library, because of Food for Fairview, and the farm and even the *Town Crier*, I think have made such a difference to make it feel like a community.

I don't see that in Fletcher. They're trying... they're trying to build it up like a little town. But most everybody there drives to Asheville. They may go out to eat at one of the restaurants in Fletcher, but even have The Local Joint. Even the breweries have added to the community that people feel they have an area that they can have... find community right here. They don't have to drive to Asheville.

TE: I think that's an excellent description that you just gave of what I, as person who's only lived here five years, that that community can still exist and does.

MDB: It does for a lot of people.

TE: Excellent description.

MB: You've seen that coming in for as a short timer?

TE: I have found that to be the case that, I think anybody, when they move somewhere new, you kind of stand back just a little bit, and you look around, and take a consensus of things, and then you decide you want to jump in and then start doing that. And when I did that, I was welcomed and it felt very good. So, I agree with you about how you can make it the place that you want it to be. Help to make it the place.

MDB: Of course, our son played soccer, and we got involved with the soccer moms and dads on the soccer field and that was huge too. That makes community.

TE: It does.

MDB: So that still is, that's still happening. But a lot of people drive their kids to the Y for soccer instead of playing for the community team.

TE: Did you have a question?

JR: Well, I wanted to build on that a little bit to say, do you see a difference between the people who were born and raised here and lived on their farms and did their thing versus the people who came in from other places? Like we have now such an influx of people.

There seems to be a sort of a divide between the old timers and the people coming in, even though they may be chronologically the same age.

MDB: The same age, yeah.

MB: Yeah, I'd say that, and it's probably depicted by the what's out front there now is that, who's the most active in the politics of it? It seems like the most active to me now are the Democratic side, and in the past has been much more conservative. And when we moved here was mostly rural farmers and all, that sometimes, in our experience with people in rural places, is they're suspicious of people who move in. And I'd say that certainly existed in Fairview when we got here.

JR: It's perfectly understandable.

MB: Where'd you come from? Who are you? You're an outsider, aren't you? How long you lived here? You're going to get that. In forest service, we got that everywhere we went. And being with the government it's like, we don't like you anyway, but we like you individually but we hate the government.

MDB: But I think we felt pretty accepted here.

MB: Oh yeah.

MDB: I think most of the people have been...

MB: Especially to who we connected with.

MDB: The people we connected with. That's true.

MB: We always felt...

MDB: And I don't know if...

MB: It helps if you're half crazy, too.

MDB: And it helps when you do these kind of community things together. That makes such a difference.

TE: It does.

MDB: Yeah, it does.

TE: When you moved here in '83, did you, maybe compared to where you were coming from, did you feel safe in Fairview?

MB: Oh yeah.

MDB: We came from Reno, Nevada, if that tells you anything.

TE: Okay. So, you felt...

MB: Sin City. It was....

TE: But you felt safe here?

MDB: Yes, we did feel safe.

TE: In what ways did you feel safe?

MB: Well, you don't lock your house up here. You just go and come.

MDB: We knew our neighbors. I think that's a big thing too. If there was anything... Yeah. If you see something unusual, you call your neighbor and say, "You notice that car?" I even

have that now. But I think knowing your neighbors, knowing your neighborhood. Of course, a lot of people don't have neighbors close. I don't know if you have neighbors close by or not.

TE: I have a couple and...

MDB: That it makes a difference.

TE: And that person will call me and say, "Did you see so and so? Do you know who that is?" So yes, I agree with that.

MDB: Or if you're going to be gone for a long time, they'll keep an eye on your house.

JR: Give them a key.

MDB: Give them a key. Tell them where it's hidden.

TE: When you moved a couple of years ago to Fletcher, did you still have that sense of security and safeness in Fairview?

MDB: Oh, before we moved.

TE: Yeah, before you moved.

MDB: Yeah, because we lived in Meadow Wood, a real tight, when we think of a tight neighborhood.

MB: And yeah, it's just 50 houses that are all to itself.

MDB: Off of Emmas Grove Road. I don't know if you know where it is, but it's a neat little neighborhood, and varied people know each other. They have get-togethers in the neighborhood. So that was hard to leave.

TE: When you moved here in '83, if you can recall what the racial ethnic background was like here?

MB: Well...

MDB: There's not much diversity

MB: Not much diversity at all. In fact, Becky Stone was an anomaly just, and...

MDB: I wish there was... We wished there were more, didn't we? We really wanted more of a diverse area.

MB: Of course, I grew up in Georgia. She grew up in Arkansas. We grew up in segregated societies and high schools. And even college was segregated for the first two years when I was in college. Georgia integrated while I was there.

JR: Georgia State?

MB: University of Georgia, University.

JR: Athens?

MB: In Athens. And so it... Fairview was pretty all white. Pretty much all white. There was a small African American group of folks down the Concord Road area there, it seemed like.

MDB: And even Reynolds...

MB: That's a family kind of a thing down there. Had a Black church there. But we didn't see a lot of interaction with that. And Reynolds, but Reynolds football always had, and I think they would recruit them from outside the Reynolds area.

MDB: Yeah, Jason too. Our friend Jason.

MB: Yeah, Jason was biracial.

MDB: One of our son's best friends. Still is. Jason Mundy, I don't know if you know or remember the Mundys. They...

MB: And he got fellowship or scholarship to Duke.

MDB: He's a great guy.

MB: From the...

JR: Wow.

MDB: I know, we're not... [inaudible 00:28:24] Carolina.

MB: Carolina. But, he's a great guy, was a great guy. And the Clarke... Well, the foundation that John runs. Are you familiar with that?

JR: Which one?

MB: The, John Ager’s, the foundation that John's the, I guess the whatever. He's not a CEO, but whatever.

MDB: Chairman.

MB: More or less, the administrator for the foundation. They dispense scholarships and grants, scholarships to mountain kids that have shown promise for college and all. And so he got one of those and went to Duke with that.

MDB: Well, then he got a Duke scholarship too, I think.

JR: Do you recall the name of the foundation?

TE: Because I haven't heard of that.

MDB: Oh, what is... I just can't bring it to mind.

MB: It's connected to the...

MDB: Farmer's Federations.

MB: Yeah, but what was the...

MDB: McClures. It's McClure.

MB: McClure. McClure Fund. Have you heard of that?

JR: Well, I know about the name, the McClures and I know about the Farmer's Federation, and I knew Elspie and all that.

MB: Because Jamie was a McClure. Jamie McClure Clarke.

MDB: I think it still give scholarships.

JR: Is it still in existence?

MDB: I think they still give scholarships. You have to be a native of Western North Carolina. You can apply for it.

JR: Oh, that's great to know about.

TE: It is. That's very interesting. We mentioned just earlier a little bit about church and some things that were going on that you all were involved in. What in general, if you can describe what, maybe not just your church, but the overall church community was like in Fairview in '83 when you moved here?

MDB: Well, we got in invited to Fairview Christian Fellowship by Kim Thompson. I think it's on the soccer field. "Do y'all have a church yet, and you need to come here." And we really didn't have a lot of experience with other churches in the area. I know there are neighbors that were involved at Fairview Baptist. But we just loved the community we felt at the Fairview Christian Fellowship, and it was small group, and our kids... It was so neat for the first time in a long... since our kids have been born, I guess, that especially our son went to church, went to school, played soccer, hung out with the same kids. It was just that... Another thing about community.

JR: Like a neighborhood.

MDB: Like a neighborhood. And we just jumped into that. And our son, the things they did at summer camp, at Susie's, and all connected with the church. And other kids were invited, but it was mainly Fairview kids.

TE: Individual churches, in my knowledge of churches and places, different places I've lived, have interests and causes that maybe each church might work toward. Do you think

in Fairview then and now that there is a sense of community among the churches that if there were incidences, events, maybe call it natural events happening, disasters or something, that is there a sense of community willing the churches to work together?

MDB: I think there is.

TE: And say, let's do something.

MDB: I think we see that with the Welcome Table, and any leftovers we have, I don't know if you know, we send them to Fairview Baptist. They feed children twice a week. They pick up kids from school on Wednesdays, and they play basketball and then they feed them a meal. They did on Sundays. They really try to focus in on children that don't have a good home life, I should say. Latchkey kids or whatever they're called now. That's probably not the word anymore.

But there are a lot of food insecure children that they do. And I know years ago, we did, I don't know if they still do, have a Thanksgiving, pre-Thanksgiving service, and I think Rusty is involved with other ministers. They get together. So, I think there's a real community in the small churches here.

But I think there are a lot of people, like we were, the last years we were here, that go to another church that's either bigger or has different things for them.

TE: Just curious.

MDB: I think more of the people that you were talking about earlier that grew up here tend to stay in their family church.

I know Nesbitt's Chapel and a lot of these churches have...

MB: Pleasant.

MDB: Pleasant Grove. This is our family's church, so to speak. And so, a lot of times new people come in and don't feel as welcome. And that's why I think we latched into Fairview, because they sure didn't make us feel like you're outsiders, where some of the churches are more family. This is our church. This is how we've always...

JR: Yes. Traditional.

MDB: Tradition.

TE: A lot of people that we've interviewed have stories to tell about individuals who are considered storytellers, or real characters within the community. Do you all have any characters in mind? You don't have to share their name if you don't want.

JR: Excluding yourselves, of course!

MB: Well, John and Annie. Collectively. Together or even apart. They're real characters, and they're game for anything, I think. I don't know. Are you familiar with Outward Bound?

TE: I know what that program is.

MB: Well, and how demanding it is, and how confidence building and all that is part of it. Well, they've both been exposed to that, and just their lifestyle is Outward Bound.

MDB: And their kids.

MB: And that's what our son loves so much was when he was with them. It was like, what are we going to do today? It's going to be something. Like, we had duck killing days and now they have turkey killing days, and stuff like that with Jamie. It's just a continuum. And the people around the farm, there had, people that worked on the farm, lived on the farm that were real characters. You've probably heard the name Owenbys.

TE: Yes.

MB: That family, they lived at the back end of the farm, up what they call Butter Row or Butter Row Creek and all that.

TE: The patent making man.

MB: Which is really Ashworth Creek. They were a notorious family, in terms of the individual kids.

MDB: Mountain people.

MB: Mountain people from way back and mountain ways. And are you familiar with mountain ways?

JR: Pretty much.

MB: Pretty much. Have you read *Our Southern Highlanders*?

JR: No. I've been putting it off.

MB: But you ought to read it, because it really introduces you well to mountain people, and the ways of mountain people, and the thinking of mountain people.

MDB: I'll tag on a little bit when about stories, our son after church, he'd say, "Well I'm going to go home with the Agers." And one day I said, "Why do you like to go up there?" Because I always fix a big meal on Sundays. And he said, "Well, because when we're sitting at the table, they say, 'What do you want? What do you guys think you want to do today? You want to hike up that mountain or you want to play basketball in the dining room?'" Anybody that lets you play basketball in the dining room.

TE: I believe that.

MDB: I believe that. So, that kind of thing. And I was thinking, and then of course Sandy Lynch is just, we go back way back with Sandy and he's a good storyteller. I tell about his growing up in Fairview that...

MB: From a character standpoint, you ought to...

JR: His name was Sandy Lynch?

MDB: Yeah. That we were talking about earlier. But I don't know if his...

MB: Terry Harwood.

MDB: Yeah, Terry Harwood picked up.

MB: Terry picked up cans on the side of the road. He was...

MDB: Little bit.

MB: So yeah, he was not all there. But he'd walk the roads all the time. He came to church. He came to our church and it was his church, too. But he, and he stored them in 55 gallon drums up at the barn, up at where the store and all is now. The Hickory Nut Gap Farm. And

Annie and John, both loosely looked after Terry, took care of Terry and helped try to help him along. And he lived with his grandmother, I think, up off the side of 74 up there. He was a real character, picked up cans, he would beat them down and store them. And then when he got them, whole bunch of them could take them and...

MDB: About this room size.

MB: And turn them in, get money. And we never knew what he would do with the money. But John was kind of a—

MDB: --caretaker.

MB: Helped him get a motor home or a big trailer to live in, because he was living in a shed.

JR: So, John Ager.

MB: Right, John Ager. And they were just trying to help him get through the winter.

JR: After he moved out of his grandmother's house.

MDB: Terry was something else about... He would, if you introduce or saw him and he'd say, "I'm the man that picks up cans." But he would also collect things. And so, every once in a while at Fairview Church he would say, "Okay, everybody stay because I've got some..."

MB: Awards.

MDB: Awards to present. And he'd always have something, if he gave us a blanket that he found on the side of the road.

MB: We call it the Terry blanket.

MDB: We had the Terry blanket forever, used it for moving. And he had all something special for Annie and John. And he was just an interesting character. And then all of a sudden he just kind of disappeared. And I don't know...

JR: You don't know what happened to him?

MDB: It seems like John said he moved to somewhere.

MB: He fell out of favor with some folks.

MDB: Well, because he had some mental problems.

MB: Yeah, he did. One was, he was hugging all the ladies that would show up.

MDB: At church.

MB: At church. And some of them were like visitors. And here comes this guy.

MDB: Of course, he didn't smell real great, but if you lived on the side of the road, you didn't smell very well, either. But I think that's the closest to almost homeless that we had here.

TE: That's the first time we've heard of this guy. So, I'm glad you shared that with us. Are there any areas of interest? Any thoughts that y'all have had in thinking about the interview that we haven't asked about that you would like to share? And Judith, do you have any questions that we haven't asked?

JR: I'll let you all go first.

MDB: Well, I was trying to think of... I'm glad we got to talk about the things that really meant so much and still do. I can get emotional thinking about how special this community is. I still walk. I go to my old neighborhood and walk about two or three days a week, and I exercise here, and I do the Welcome Table, and I can't believe the difference I've found in where we live now and living here. But it's okay. And we're not that far away. I can be here in 20 minutes, but it's just...

JR: You keep up with your old friends.

MDB: Yeah, we keep up with friends and close friends.

MB: I don't know if you've heard of them, but there's the old timers, and I'm talking about older than even John or Annie and Pat Stone when they came here. They just came just a few years before we got here, I think, from college.

MDB: Because they married.

MB: Because they married into the community, more than anything else. But Doug Clarke has got a lot of history and knows a lot of history, and if you haven't talked to Doug...

TE: No, we haven't.

MDB: Yeah. I wonder if some other people have that. I would think he would be one....

TE: We'll check and see.

MB: Yeah. And he knows a lot about the Gerton element, if that's, and if y'all are getting into any of that Gerton history...

JR: Well, we touched on that when we talked to the Stones.

TE: Becky and Pat. Yeah. They lived there for a while.

MDB: Yeah, they did.

JR: Somehow it’s Doug related.

MDB: Doug is Annie's brother.

JR: Annie's brother? Mm-hmm.

MB: He's the youngest of the Clarke family. And there was a name that just popped up to me. It was Bud Huntley that... I don't know if you've heard that name.

TE: No, I have not.

MB: He was a stone mason and did exquisite work.

TE: Oh wow.

MB: And if you know...

MDB: The cove, I think he did some work out there.

MB: No, I don't think so. No, that was Coffey.

MDB: Oh, that was Coffey. You're right.

MB: But he had his own way of working and it’s his trademark was the way he busted stone and put it... He used natural stone.

JR: And he did, where did he live? I don't...

MB: He lived up--

TE: Did you get that name?

MB: In... He lived in Fairview Forest.

MDB: Oh, okay. Old Fort.

MB: Right. Off Old Fort.

JR: Wright's Cove?

MB: Fairview Forest. Fairview Forest is a story. Probably somebody could tell you about Fairview Forest in the--

MDB: It used to be--

MB: And the starting of it and how it went, and Dean, what was his name? Something Dean.

MDB: He owned all this property.

MB: Yeah, he had his office down here.

MDB: Gerald Dean. But he's no longer alive, but...

MB: Have you heard that name?

MDB: He was a builder and controversial.

MB: He was a realtor.

JR: He was the one who didn't want to be interviewed.

TE: Oh, that's right.

MDB: That's right. I bet he wouldn't. Yeah, you're right.

MB: Gerald Dean's dead.

MDB: Now he's dead, but it may be his family. Yeah. He's been dead for several years. But he developed that area of Fairview Forest. [inaudible 00:42:54]

MB: And there's a lot of history, good and bad with that area there. But Bud Huntley was a character. That's the one you're talking about. Characters. Yeah. And other people know him a lot... Knew him a lot better than I ever did.

JR: Is he still around?

MB: I think that...

MDB: I don't know.

MB: I think he may be. The Millers would certainly know. I don't know if you know the... Tom Miller?

MDB: Tom Miller? Tom.

TE: Tommy Joe?

MDB: No, just Tom Miller. Tom and what's her name?

MB: Lorraine.

MDB: Lorraine. Yeah. Lorraine. Loretta. Loretta Miller.

MB: Loretta.

JR: That sounds familiar.

MDB: And they may have interviewed them. They live on Old Fort Road and...

TE: Oh yeah.

JR: We interviewed them.

MDB: Okay. So, he knows a lot of people too, because they grew up, they lived here all their life. And Jerry Miller was an attorney that lived close to them, too. But he's not here anymore. Not in the area. He's retired. He was a prosecuting attorney or...

MB: Yeah, he was a federal prosec… Well, he did, his big case was Jim Bakker.

MDB: Yeah. That a big...

MB: He prosecuted Jim Bakker.

TE: That was a big case. That was a big case. Well, thank... Judith. Did you have...

JR: No, I'm good.

TE: You're good?

MDB: We've had fun. This has been good.

TE: This has been... You've given us a lot of new information, things that we had not heard before. So, you've really added to this project so much. And we really appreciate your time today. And thank you again for coming.

MDB: Thank you.

JR: And not just the factual things, but you clearly love the place and it's just wonderful to hear that enthusiasm.

MDB: Our kids. It meant so much to our son. Lori, too. But I think because she went to Reynolds in ninth grade, a lot of her friends were not Fairview friends.

MB: And then she went to UNCA and there was quite a contingent of young people that went from Reynolds, Fairview, Reynolds, UNC, Chapel Hill.

MDB: A lot of our kids.

TE: Little circuit there.

MB: There's a lot of kids that went Fairview Elementary, Reynolds, and were superlatives there. It's not just mountain kids that didn't use the right verb all the time.

JR: It's a good thing.

MDB: Yeah, it’s a good thing. Thank you.

JR: Thank you again.

END OF INTERVIEW.